

OPINION

That's our money

Sitting governments must look forward to auditor general reports the way the rest of us anticipate a root canal from a dentist with a bad case of the shakes.

Usually such reports detail how the government and agencies under its purview waste taxpayers' hard-earned money. Such was the case last week when provincial Auditor General Jim McCarter's report outlined a litany of problems with the way Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government spends tax dollars.

Among the lowlights:

- Children's Aid Society (CAS) assessments for vulnerable children weren't done in time in 73 per cent of the cases.
- One CAS executive received a \$2,000 gym membership and an additional

\$2,600 for a personal trainer.

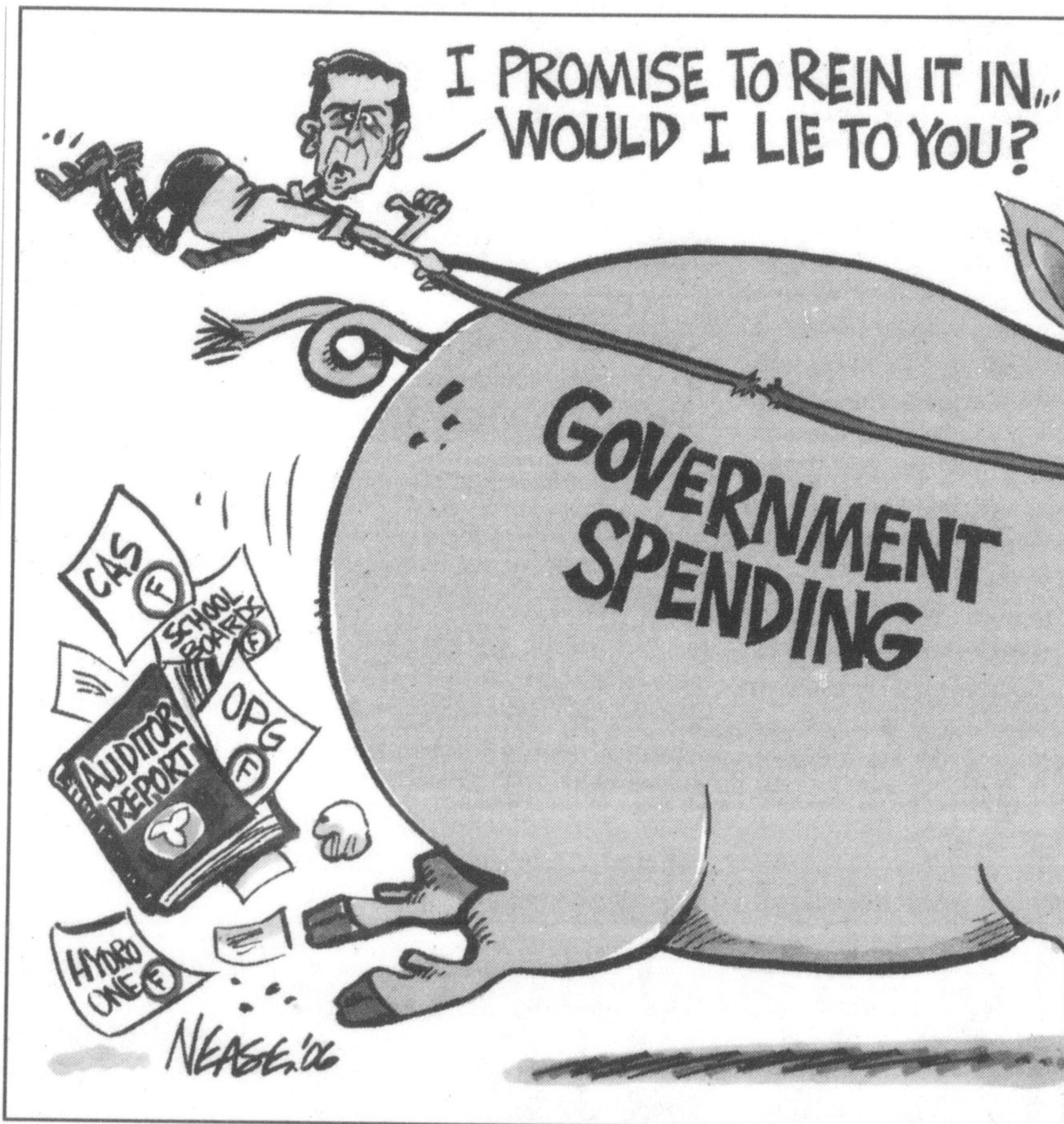
- Two senior CAS executives were given SUVs worth \$53,000 and \$59,000.

• One teacher spent \$52,000 over two years using a school board purchasing card. Included in that total was \$4,000 spent during a summer break on DVDs, eyeglasses and Christmas lights.

• Three senior school board staff members went to Las Vegas for a four-day conference but stayed a week and charged \$660 for a one-week car rental.

Now that the government has had its hand slapped and various employees have been "outed" we can be confident that our money will no longer be spent foolishly.

That is, until we get the next auditor general's report. We can hardly wait.



ReadersWrite

Send your letters to miltone@haltonsearch.com or drop them off at 875 Main St. E.

MP's independence not helpful

DEAR EDITOR:

The Champion's article reporting on Garth Turner's town hall meeting made no mention of my question to him concerning his effectiveness as an independent MP.

Despite the fact that Halton was one of the few Ontario ridings to elect a Conservative, and therefore a member of the government, we haven't seen one member of the cabinet visit Halton nor have we seen any federal funds flow into the riding to help us with infrastructure. But that should come as no surprise considering who our member of parliament is.

Why would any government distribute funds into a riding that's represented by an MP who not only attacks the policies and decisions of the

government, but goes even further by launching personal attacks against the prime minister and other members of that government?

At the meeting, Colin Best stated that Halton requires over \$100 million to repair our highways, bridges, water and sewage systems — funding that must come from the upper levels of government. Unfortunately, as long as Turner is our member of parliament, I believe we can forget about receiving any assistance from Ottawa.

As for the Quebec resolution, by bringing forward the resolution as he did, Stephen Harper not only prevented a pro-separatist motion from coming forward, but he was also able to get the separatist

Bloc members to vote in favour of a resolution recognizing 'a united Canada' — something no previous PM has ever been able to do.

By fast-tracking the resolution, the prime minister has avoided a repeat of a divisive national debate reminiscent of the Meech Lake debate. That debate eventually led to increased support for separation in Quebec, the creation of the Bloc Quebecois and separatists occupying seats in Canada's Parliament. More than 260 of Canada's elected MPs voted in favour of the resolution, versus 15 who opposed it. Only time will tell who was right.

**RICK MALBOEUF
WOODWARD AVENUE**

Caring Tree an appropriate symbol for nurses

DEAR EDITOR:

The tradition of caring continues at Milton District Hospital.

The 'Caring Tree' was lit last Tuesday evening at the hospital's annual tree lighting event.

I was applauding the nurses in the complex care unit as they guided my family through the sad event of our mom passing from us. Nurses' decisions impact the lives of their patients and their families.

Families come from afar, based on a nurse's advice, private rooms are arranged by nurses, comfort practices are provided to patients at critical times, information to improve understand-

ing is imparted to family by nurses and emotional support is given.

What an exemplary gift of caring we all received. We want to thank Dorothy, Claire, Olive, Heather, Kirsten, Tara, Mary Jane, Melanie, Marilyn, Gail, Sherri, Karen P., Monique, Laurie, Sonia and their charge nurse, Nicolina. Dr. Kamouna continued to guide us along too, with a very personal touch.

The 'Caring Tree' was lit in honour of past, present and future staff. There is no question that the present staff demonstrates caring.

**SHARON GILBERT
MILTON**

Is car horn beeping really a big deal?

DEAR EDITOR:

I'm writing this in response to the November 3 letter to the editor entitled 'Late-night car horn beeping quite annoying'.

I don't live on the same street as the person who wrote this letter, but I do live in Hawthorne Village.

I come from the other side of the page on this one. I work nights. Nowadays we all have to do what it takes to pay our bills. I get home at about 7 a.m. and have to listen to people locking their car doors all day long as they come in and out of their houses while I'm trying to sleep.

I'm not trying to make a complaint out of this. I realize that my work day is different from many, but my point is that in this ever-changing 24/7 world, you have to learn to relax a bit.

If the biggest thing you have to complain about is a beep noise at 10:50 p.m., you're lucky. With the recent increase in car break-ins and things like that, guess what I would do — the same thing at 10:50 p.m., just to make sure my door is locked.

Please people, relax. Oh, and in regard to sitting in your driveway laying on the horn at 6 a.m., I don't think a beep and laying on the horn are really comparable.

**JAMES SMITH
MILTON**

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